

REMARKS

Claims 9-12, 14-18, 20-24 and 26-33 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-17 and 21-25 are rejected. Claims 18-20 are objected to. Claims 1-8, 13, 19 and 25 have been canceled. Claims 26-33 have been added. No new matter has been added. It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims define allowable subject matter.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that claims 18-20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and Applicants are amending these claims accordingly.

Claims 1-14, 16, and 21-25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hanawa (U.S. Patent 4,767,993). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claim 1-8 have been canceled and accordingly the rejection of these claims is now moot and should be withdrawn. Claim 9, from which allowable claim 19 depends, has been amended to include the recitations of claim 19, as well as the recitations of intervening claim 13 (which depends directly from claim 9). Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 9 as amended is now allowable. Further claims 10-12, 14, 16 and 21-24 depend from allowable independent claim 9. When the recitations of these claims are considered in combination with the recitations of claim 9, Applicants submit that these dependent claims are likewise allowable for at least the same reasons set forth above. Claims 13 and 25 has been canceled.

Claim 15 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanawa as applied to claim 9 and further in view of Molyneaux et al. (U.S. Patent 6,836,118). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 15 and 17 depend from allowable independent claim 9. When the recitations of these claims are considered in combination with the recitations of claim 9, Applicants submit that these dependent claims are likewise allowable for at least the same reasons set forth above.

Claims 18 and 20 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants submit that these claims are likewise allowable.

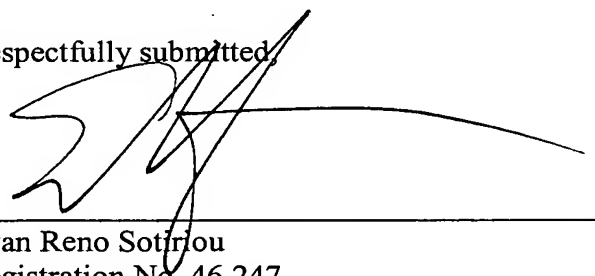
Further, newly added claims 26-29 (similar to allowable claims 10-12 and 14) depend from claim 18, which is indicated as allowable, and claims 30-33 (similar to allowable claims 10-12 and 14) depend from claim 20 which is indicated as allowable. Accordingly, Applicants submit that these claims are likewise allowable.

Claims 1, 9 and 25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Molyneaux (U.S. Patent 5,394,087). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 1 and 25 have been canceled. Claim 9, from which allowable claim 19 depends, has been amended to include the recitations of claim 19, as well as the recitations of intervening claim 13 (which depends directly from claim 9).

Thus, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejections and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the prior art fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention and all of the pending claims in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited. Should anything remain in order to place the present application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Evan Reno Sotiropoulos', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping 'E' and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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